WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Hijacking of Alliance Airlines Mumbai-Delhi Flight

*24. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had gone on record confirming the hijacking of an Alliance Air late night flight from Mumbai to Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it subsequently turned out to be a case of false alarm;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(e) the system which was in place at the time of the incident and the details thereof and the points at which this system was breached; and

(f) whether any accountability has been fixed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (f) On 3.10.2001 at 23.22 hours an anonymous telephone call was received about the imminent hijacking of Alliance Air flight CD-7444 operating on Mumbai-Delhi sector. This message was received when the flight was already airborne. The message was conveyed to the aircraft with instructions to take necessary precautionary measures. However, due to some misunderstanding, the pilot-in-command concluded that the plane had been hijacked and activated the hijack signal at around 00.12 hrs. The aircraft landed at IGI Airport at 00.50 hrs.

Based on the message received from the aircraft, information regarding the reported hijack was shared with all concerned. As per the systems in place, necessary measures were initiated on ground for handling the unlawful interference in aviation activity.

ATC, Delhi was constantly in touch with the aircraft, and efforts were made to elicit relevant information, including in regard to the number of hijackers, their position etc. It was subsequently decided to send the National Security Guard Commandoes through the cockpit window. It was only after these commandoes later went into the cabin, and segregated the two suspected passengers, that it became clear that there were no armed hijackers on the aeroplane, and that a false alarm had been given.

A high level Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs to examine in totality the situation arising out of the chain of events triggered by an anonymous telephone call regarding the imminent hijacking of flight No. CD-7444 operating on Mumbai-Delhi sector. The Committee has since submitted its report. In the meantime Alliance Air has placed the entire crew of the flight off the flying duties.

Aircrashes of small aircrafts

*25. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of aircrashes/mishaps relating to the small aircrafts being operated by private companies during the last three years;

(b) in how many of the above-mentioned crahses/mishaps, the enquiry committees have been set up and whether any reports have been submitted by any of these committees; and

(c) the status of the implementation of recommendations of these reports and whether in any of these reports submitted by the committees, mishap/crash has been attributed to the inexperience/under-experience of pilots?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) During the last three years, there have been 7 air crashes to small aircraft operated by private companies.

(b) Out of these 7 accidents, the Government had ordered a Committee of Inquiry into the recent aircrash to M/s. Jindal Strips Ltd. aircraft at Mainpuri (U.P.) on 30.9.2001 under Rule 74 of Aircraft Rules, 1937. One aircrash which took place at Bangladesh is being investigated by that State. The remaining five accidents were investigated under Rule 71 of Aircraft Rules, 1937 by Inspector of Accidents. Reports of 4 accidents have been received.

(c) Action on the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry will be taken on submission of the report by the Committee to the Government. 28 recommendations have been made in the 4 accident investigation report of the Inspector of Accidents, out of which 11 recommendations have been fully implemented. Some of the pending recommendations which are of long term and are of administrative nature are being followed up with the concerned agencies. Inexperience/under-experience of the pilots has not been brought out in the above reports.